

Midtown Neighborhoods Plan

Neighborhood Demographics

The following tables provide the 1990 Census of Population and Housing demographics for both the Midtown planning area and the City as a whole. This information was used during the planning process as the community worked to develop goals, objectives and action steps for improving the neighborhoods in the planning area.

Neighborhood Age Breakdown

Age Group	Under 5	5 - 17	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65 plus
#	902	2,037	1,041	3,550	1,660	1,662
%	8%	19%	10%	33%	15%	15%

Income & Poverty

	Neighborhood	City
Annual Median Household Income	\$14,730	\$23,584
Persons (%) below Poverty Level	3,958 (37%)	207,161 (23%)

Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years & Older

	Neighborhood		City	
Less than 12 th Grade	3,569	45%	171,654	31%
High School Graduate	1,832	23%	135,221	24%
Some College	1,512	19%	129,370	22%
Associate Degree	250	3%	29,591	5%
Bachelor Degree	566	7%	64,437	12%
Graduate Degree	184	2%	34,771	6%
Total 25+ years	7,913	100%	565,044	100%

Housing

	Neighborhood		City	
Owner-occupied	1,738	44%	176,422	54%
Renter-occupied	2,174	56%	150,339	46%
Total occupied units	3,912		326,761	
Vacant housing	608	13%	38,653	11%
Total housing units	4,520		365,414	

	Neighborhood	City
Median Housing Value	\$45,200	\$49,700
Median Monthly Rent	\$268	\$308
Median Housing Age	1943	1969

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The following tables provide information on the current and projected demographics for both the Midtown planning area and the City as a whole. The numbers found in the following tables were developed by Claritas Corporation in 1999.

Total Population Comparison

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	11,765	--	786,023	--	1%
1990	10,873	-8%	935,933	19%	1%
1999	11,946	10%	1,192,300	27%	1%
2004	12,601	5%	1,297,100	9%	1%

Ethnicity Comparison - Hispanic

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	8,559	--	421,954	--	2%
1990	8,577	0%	520,282	23%	2%
1999	10,175	19%	679,507	31%	1%
2004	11,042	9%	768,776	13%	1%

Ethnicity Comparison - Anglo

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	2,958	--	299,357	--	1%
1990	2,069	-30%	339,115	13%	1%
1999	1,505	-27%	310,760	-8%	0%
2004	1,268	-16%	292,759	-6%	0%

Ethnicity Comparison – African American

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	145	--	57,700	--	0%
1990	136	-6%	63,260	10%	0%
1999	141	4%	66,945	6%	0%
2004	151	7%	68,387	2%	0%

Ethnicity Comparison – Other

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	103	--	6,869	--	1%
1990	101	-2%	13,276	93%	1%
1999	125	24%	18,980	43%	1%
2004	140	12%	22,203	17%	1%

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Total Number of Households Comparison

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	4,444	--	271,278	--	2%
1990	3,926	-12%	326,761	20%	1%
1999	4,501	15%	392,573	20%	1%
2004	4,846	8%	429,271	9%	1%

Average Household Size Comparison

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	2.57	--	2.97	--	87%
1990	2.71	5%	2.80	-6%	97%
1999	2.60	-4%	2.69	-4%	97%
2004	2.55	-2%	2.63	-2%	97%

Median Household Income Comparison

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	\$10,344	--	\$13,775	--	77%
1990	\$14,787	43%	\$23,584	71%	63%
1999	\$19,917	35%	\$32,238	37%	62%
2004	\$21,853	10%	\$36,330	13%	60%

Average Household Income Comparison

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	\$12,385	--	\$17,460	--	71%
1990	\$20,000	61%	\$30,614	75%	65%
1999	\$27,202	36%	\$45,657	49%	60%
2004	\$31,393	15%	\$55,236	21%	57%

Total Number of Housing Units Comparison

Year	Midtown	% Change	City	% Change	Ratio
1980	4,785	--	291,560	--	2%
1990	4,539	-5%	365,414	25%	1%
1999	4,846	7%	415,790	14%	1%
2004	5,219	8%	454,619	9%	1%

Midtown Neighborhoods Plan**Neighborhood History**

The following text was written and researched by MidTown on Blanco. The text first appeared in a series of newsletters published by MidTown on Blanco.

The Alta Vista and Beacon Hill neighborhoods are two of several unique older neighborhoods that evolved during San Antonio's first and greatest expansion, which began in the 1850s and continued with few interruptions until the Great Depression of the 1930s. These neighborhoods grew around the San Antonio Street Railway Trolley lines that originally provided access to historic San Pedro Springs Park. By 1890, electric trolleys were traveling the fixed rail system carrying passengers to San Pedro Springs Park and in the process, significantly influenced the development of the city's first new subdivisions to the north.

Alta Vista and Beacon Hill were among the first "modern" platted subdivisions developed in San Antonio. Alta Vista and Beacon Hill are actually the names of modern-day neighborhood associations. The original platted subdivisions within the boundaries of Alta Vista and Beacon Hill include Laurel Heights Addition, Treasure Hill, Fox's Beacon Hill, Beacon Hill, Beacon Hill Terrace, and North Haven and were developed over three decades from the early 1890s to the late 1920s.

The development of the modern-day Alta Vista and Beacon Hill neighborhoods transformed farm and ranch land located in the hills north of the central district into residential subdivisions with distinctive turn-of-the-century architecture where many prominent San Antonians lived at the turn of the century. The history of this area is unique and very interesting.

The Beginning

The evolution of the area located roughly between Hildebrand and San Pedro Park, and IH-10 West and San Pedro Avenue may be traced to the turn of the century when today's Alta Vista and Beacon Hill were developed as a part of the first northward expansion of the City of San Antonio.

The San Antonio City Limits were established in 1838, and consisted of 36 square miles. North Street (Hildebrand), which is the northern boundary of Alta Vista and Beacon Hill, also was the northern boundary of the city limits from 1838 until 1944. However, prior to 1870, most residences and businesses were located in or near the central district. Several factors significantly influenced the first northward expansion of the city and the development of the present day Alta Vista and Beacon Hill neighborhoods.

First, the city's population grew from slightly over 8,200 persons in 1860, when the city was still a frontier town, to nearly 38,000 persons in 1890. With this magnitude of growth, the pressure to expand outward from the original central city was immense.

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Second, the development of San Pedro Park as a recreational destination may have been one of the most significant influences in the city's first northward expansion, pulling San Antonians northward to enjoy the beautiful park above the city. Reserved as a public park in 1851, San Pedro Park became one of the most popular attractions for San Antonians as early as 1854. The flowing San Pedro Springs helped make the park a place where San Antonians of the 1850s came to relax and have fun. Outdoor concerts, dances, and political rallies were held regularly at the park. In the 1860s, J.J. Duerler, who leased the park from the city, developed an amusement park with a small museum, zoo, and artificial lakes. As early as 1858, a stable owner by the name of W.D. Cotton was making two trips a day from downtown to the park by horse-drawn carriage.

Recognizing the demand for transportation northward to San Pedro Park, J.J. Duerler established the San Antonio Street Railway Company in 1866, to construct a street railway from downtown to the park. However, Mr. Duerler died in 1874, before he could construct the railway. Colonel Augustus Belknap took over and constructed the initial line of the San Antonio Street Railway from Main Plaza to San Pedro Park by 1878. Transportation on the line was provided by mule-drawn car. The construction of this line literally opened up the area around San Pedro Park for development.

Third, the arrival of the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railway in 1877, was the final factor that fueled the city's first suburban expansion and the development of the Alta Vista and Beacon Hill neighborhoods. The railway not only provided accessibility to visitors and new residents, but also provided access to building materials to construct new homes and commercial buildings, as well as new street car lines to meet the demands of the growing population. By 1890, the city's first modern real estate boom was underway and the city's first suburbs were being built.

Building Homes

The first wave of expansion began to occur on the fringes of the central district where some of the city's grand old neighborhoods were built. King William and Tobin Hill are examples of the first neighborhoods developed on the fringe of the central district where some of the city's most prominent citizens lived. These areas were developed the old-fashioned way where individuals would purchase a plot of land and build a home on that land. In some cases, as in Tobin Hill, whole families would settle in the same area.

Beginning in 1890, the "modern" method of residential development was introduced in where the developer would assemble parcels of land into one property and "subdivide" the parcels into residential lots. The developer then would file a survey of the property which showed the location and dimensions of the individual lots in the subdivision. The subdivision survey is called a plat.

The first "modern" residential subdivision to be officially platted in San Antonio was Adam's Laurel Heights, which is now a part of the Monte Vista neighborhood. Adam's

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Laurel Heights encompassed the area between Magnolia and Woodlawn to the north and south, and Howard and San Pedro to the east and west. It also included the land between McCullough and Howard to the east and west, and Summit and Woodlawn to the north and south.

Jay E. Adams of Colorado saw the potential for development north of San Pedro Springs Park that apparently no San Antonian saw at the time. Donald E. Everett, the famed San Antonio historian, provides some insight into why this area was overlooked by San Antonio developers. In a January 28, 1988 supplement to the North San Antonio Times and Alamo Heights Recorder-Times called "Monte Vista: The Gilded Age of an Historic District, 1890-1930," Mr. Everett captures the general sentiment of the time when he observes that the location of the proposed Adams Laurel Heights was viewed simply as Mrs. Kampmann's goat pasture which was:

A dry and barren wilderness, which sustained only mesquite brush, cat claws, chaparral, and wild Mountain Laurel, had long been declared fit for nothing by most San Antonio citizens.

It's no wonder that Mr. Adams was severely criticized when he proposed the development of Adam's Laurel Heights. In fact he was publicly ridiculed at the time by several of the very influential city fathers who did not believe that the land north of San Pedro Park was worth developing.

But Jay E. Adams proved to be right, Mr. Everett observes, "suburbs throughout the city enjoyed a building boom in the spring of 1901, but Laurel Heights exceeded them all in popularity." And, as a result, the door was opened for development north of San Pedro Springs Park. But, only after overcoming one more obstacle.

Alta Vista and Beacon Hill's Development

Laurel Heights Addition - 1893

In 1893, Jay E. Adams platted Laurel Heights Addition, his second residential subdivision located across San Pedro Avenue from his Adam's Laurel Heights. There was only one problem -- The Panic of 1893. According to Donald E. Everett, a depression in the San Antonio real estate market occurred between 1893 and 1896. This depression must have been very unsettling to Mr. Adams after having been so severely criticized for proposing his first development.

Laurel Heights Addition was the first subdivision platted in the area now known as Alta Vista and Beacon Hill. Mr. Adams purchased the land for Laurel Heights Addition for \$7,000. The subdivision is bounded by W. Summit to the north, Russell Place to the south, San Pedro to the east, and Blanco Road to the west. The typical lot in Laurel Heights Addition featured a 50-foot frontage and were similar in size to those platted in Adam's Laurel Heights in 1890.

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Today, the Missouri Pacific Railroad bisects this tract of land. The Beacon Hill portion of the tract is to the west of the railroad tracts, while Alta Vista is to the east. Also, Mark Twain Middle School is located at the north east corner of this subdivision between W. Summit and Mulberry on San Pedro.

Treasure Hill - 1906

Treasure Hill was platted in 1906, after the Panic of 1883 and became the second residential subdivision to be developed in the Alta Vista/Beacon Hill area. Jay E. Adams also was involved in this development. But this time it appears that he decided to share the risk with partners, Kirkpatrick, and Nicholson.

Treasure Hill is located between Russell Place to the north and Fredericksburg Road to the south and west, and Blanco Road to the east. Located only a few blocks west of San Pedro Springs Park, Treasure Hill had excellent access to the park's entertainment and recreational amenities. It also was an ideal location for residents who worked and/or shopped downtown, being located only a few blocks from the north-bound trolley on N. Flores, and to the south-bound trolley on Fredericksburg Road.

The residential subdivision features large lots similar in size to those developed by Jay E. Adams in Laurel Heights Addition. Treasure Hill was the last subdivision in Alta Vista/Beacon Hill to feature large lots.

Fox's Beacon Hill - 1907

Fox's Beacon Hill was platted in 1907 by Edwards Realty Company whose principals were F.M. Edwards and E.A. Fox. It is located between Hildebrand to the north, W. Elsmere to the south, Blanco Road to the east and Capitol to the west.

The developers of Fox's Beacon Hill were among the first to use newspaper advertising to sell homes and lots. In the September 1, 1907 issue of the Express-News, an advertisement announces homes for sale for \$5 down and \$5 monthly, and lots for \$50 to \$75. In addition, the same advertisement claims "no taxes and no interest - only 4 blocks from [street] car" and instructs the potential buyer, "Be sure and get off [the street car] at North Flores and Blanco where our automobile will meet you today."

Beacon Hill Addition ("The Queen Suburb") - 1908

Nicholson, Furnish, and Smith platted Beacon Hill Addition in 1908 and then proceeded to blitz the public (by 1908 standards) with newspaper advertising. The September 1907 Express-News ads called Beacon Hill "The Queen Suburb" with "The highest and most beautiful locations."

Beacon Hill Addition is located between W. Elsmere to the north, W. Russell to the south, Blanco Road to the east, and Capitol and Fredericksburg Road to the west.

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The 1907 print ads also expressed high expectations, claiming that Beacon Hill Addition, "[is a] 203-acre tract - sufficient for 500 homes of 100-foot frontage each and a population of 5,000 prosperous owners." The owners' predicted, "Beacon Hill will be to San Antonio what Hollywood is to Los Angeles."

In Beacon Hill, there was something for everyone. For example, a September 15, 1907 ad advertised more affordable lots, "Beacon Hill Tracts No. 2 and 3, Where fortune smiles on the man of limited means."

Beacon Hill Terrace and North Haven

After Beacon Hill Addition was platted in 1908, it would be approximately 12 years before residential development continued in Alta Vista and Beacon Hill. One reason for this gap could be that property probably was used as a golf course and athletic fields until it was platted for residential use beginning in 1920.

The San Antonio Golf and Country Club maintained a nine-hole golf course and club house on the property between 1904 to 1907. This property is located between Hildebrand, W. Summit, San Pedro and Blanco Road. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show that the club house was located on the north side of W. Summit, just west of N. Flores. At the time, N. Flores ended at its intersection with W. Summit.

In 1908, the San Antonio Golf and Country Club became the San Antonio Country Club and moved to their present location on N. New Braunfels. According to the Club's History, "After three years of playing in Mrs. Stribling's cow pasture, they decided that they needed a more ambitious golf club."

Mr. B.G. Irish completed the residential subdivision development in Alta Vista/Beacon Hill. Between 1920 and 1925, Mr. Irish platted the remaining undeveloped property located between Hildebrand, W. Summit, San Pedro and Blanco Road.

In 1920, B.G. Irish platted Beacon Hill Terrace located between Hildebrand and W. Summit to the north and south, and the Missouri-Pacific Railroad and Blanco Road to the east and west. Today, Beacon Hill Terrace is located in the Beacon Hill Area Neighborhood.

North Haven was platted in 1921 with Hildebrand and W. Lynwood as its north/south boundaries. North Haven (2nd Filing) was platted in 1925 and is located between W. Lynwood and W. Summit. San Pedro and the Missouri-Pacific Railroad form the east/west boundaries of both North Haven subdivisions which are located in today's Alta Vista Neighborhood.

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Many of the city's most prominent citizens were the first to move into San Antonio's first suburbs which were located high above the overcrowded central city and many of whose homes were designed by some of the city's most respected architects.

In 1923, two years before residential development would be complete, Agnes Cotton School No. 20 was built. The opening of the Agnes Cotton school signaled that there was the critical mass of residents in Alta Vista/Beacon Hill that warranted the construction of educational facilities. It also was a signal that this prosperous population of consumers would soon create the demand for goods and services.

MidTown Business District's The Early Years: 1920s and 1930s

The MidTown Business District was born as the Alta Vista and Beacon Hill neighborhoods were maturing. The MidTown Business District was primarily rural during the first two decades of the Twentieth Century. In 1910, only a few homes dotted the district located at 1801, 1803, 1815, 1817, and 1917 Blanco Road. These homes were occupied by the Remiling, Daugherty, and Partin families. It appears that of these original structures, only the home located at 1815 Blanco Road remains. David W. Pipes owns the building and uses it for his wood working business. All of the other original homes were demolished to make room for commercial development.

The first commercial building to be built in the MidTown Business District was today's Powell Cleaners building located at 1401 Blanco Road at its intersection with W. Summit. Originally constructed in 1924, the building was the home of the Blanco Road Drug Shop from around 1924 until the late 1930s. However, the Blanco Road Drug Shop was located on the southern fringe of the area where the focus of commercial buildings would occur.

The first commercial multi-tenant building was constructed circa 1926, at the north east corner of Blanco Road and Coffman Street (Elsmere) at 1710 to 1720 Blanco Road. The two blocks between Fulton and Beacon Avenue (W. Lynwood) rapidly developed into the heart of the MidTown Business District as three new commercial multi-tenant buildings and a large Handy Andy Grocery store were constructed between 1926 and 1934. Over 40,000 square feet of retail space was built in this two-block area along Blanco Road in the eight years between 1926 and 1934.

By the late-1930s, the MidTown Business District had four grocery stores (Handy Andy, Piggly Wiggly, Hom-Ond, and a Red and White), two drug stores with soda fountains (Sommer's and Prassel's), a Winn's five and dime store, Taylor's Bakery, several beauty salons and barber shops, clothing stores, a shoe repair shop, The Elsmere Cafe, Casbeer's Place and even a gas station (1801 Blanco Road).

It's surprising that this portion of the Midtown Business District developed during a time in history when the country had plunged into the Great Depression of the 1930s. As

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these businesses flourished, this two-block area became the heart of the neighborhoods. The business district continued to thrive during the post-World War II years. But, by the 1950s, storm clouds were brewing on the horizon that would radically change the course of the Alta Vista and Beacon Hill neighborhoods and the MidTown Business District.

MidTown Business District: The Declining Years

In 1951, Handy Andy Store No. 16, located at 1704 Blanco Road, was like the proverbial canary in the coal mine. This was the year that Store No. 16 closed after 20 years of service to the neighborhood. Like the canary that is the first to be affected by deadly gas in the coal mine, the closing of Handy Andy did not bode well for the MidTown Business District.

Handy Andy's departure was very significant because of the substantial investment they made in the neighborhood. While three other grocery stores including Piggly Wiggly Store No. 24, Mustsaer's Red and White and Hom-Ond Food Store No. 11 were located in the business district at the same time as Handy Andy, they were all tenants in MidTown buildings. Only Handy Andy built their own building at 1704 Blanco Road in the early 1930s to house Store No. 16. Handy Andy's dis-investment in the neighborhood in 1951 signaled the beginning of a downward spiral in the business district that would continue for nearly five decades.

Why did Handy Andy leave? While there may have been many reasons for their decision to leave the neighborhood, lack of adequate parking was probably the primary reason. Handy Andy was able to manage for 20 years without much parking, but the soaring popularity of the automobile eventually forced them to find a new location to accommodate the increasing demand for parking spaces. By 1960, all but one of the original four grocery stores moved out of the MidTown Business District.

Cities, neighborhoods, and districts have a dynamic quality. In other words, they are constantly changing. These neighborhood changes may be generally categorized into four stages including growth, stability, decline, and revitalization. The departure of Handy Andy and the other MidTown grocery stores ushered in a stage of decline. This came, however, only after Alta Vista, Beacon Hill and MidTown had been through periods of growth and stability.

The growth stage began in 1893, the year the Laurel Heights Addition was platted, and this growth continued for almost 40 years until the mid-1930s when Alta Vista and Beacon Hill were fully developed and populated. The MidTown Business District went through its growth period from the mid-1920s until 1940 when it provided store, restaurants, clothing stores and a wide variety of services ranging from beauty shops to a shoe repair shop. Both neighborhoods and the business district remained relatively stable from about 1940 to 1950.

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During the 1950s, many changes began to occur which fueled the neighborhoods' and business district's decline. During the 1950s, the use of the automobile exploded in popularity and the nation's interstate highway system was built. San Antonio's interstate and loop highway systems also were built during this time. The highways opened up fresh frontiers as new suburbs were built along Loop 410 and people began to move out of the older neighborhoods. By the 1960s, retailing had changed dramatically with the development of the regional mall. Mom and pop entrepreneurs in neighborhood business districts like MidTown could not compete with the mall. Consequently, neighborhoods and neighborhood business districts alike began to lose their vitality and to slowly deteriorate.

In the mid-1990s, circumstances that had fueled the decline of Alta Vista, Beacon Hill and MidTown began to change. The stirring of a revitalization movement was about to be born.

Historic data sources:

- 1) San Antonio on Track by Ann Maria Watson, Trinity University, Urban Studies Program, May 1982.
- 2) U.S. Census historic data for San Antonio, Texas

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Resource Directory

Planning Team

Kathy Bailey, Alta Vista NA

Bill Bender, Beacon Hill NA

John Braxton, President, Beacon Hill NA

Hector Cardenas, Alta Vista NA

Fred Chavez, President, Alta Vista NA

Patricia Clayworth, Mark Twain MS

Kevin Cloonan, Alta Vista NA

Jimmy M Contreras, Alta Vista NA

Rachel Espinosa, Alta Vista NA

June Kachtik, Executive Director, UU Housing Assistance Corporation

Rick Reyna, Executive Director, MidTown on Blanco

Mike Villarreal, Vice President, Beacon Hill NA

Father Emiliano Zapata, St. Ann's Catholic Church

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Heart of the Neighborhood Work Group Members

Kathy Bailey	Kenny Davis	John Merson
Elva Cardenas	Barbara Garza	Lupe Porte
Hector Cardenas	Carol Haywood	Rick Reyna
Fred Chavez	June Kachtik	Allen Sikes
Jimmy M Contreras	Mike McChesney	Jessica Zembala
Maria Crabtree	Mary Frances Merson	

Heart of the Neighborhood Consulting Experts

Ann McGlone, COSA Planning Department, Historic Division; 207-7900	Betsy Spencer, Neighborhood Action Department; 207-7881
Felix Padron, COSA Public Works Department, Design Enhancement Program; 207-4433	Ivy Taylor, Housing & Community Development Department; 207-6606
Gabriel Perez (no longer with the City), COSA Public Works Department, Capital Programs Division, call 207-8140 for information	Celine Casillas-Thomasson, Neighborhood Action Department, Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) Program; 207-7881

Getting Around Town/Rebuilding Our Infrastructure Work Group

James Bailey	Jose G Guadiana	Rick Reyna
Rene Balderas	Carol Haywood	Sonia A Viesca
Jimmy M Contreras	Samuel G Perez	

Getting Around Town/Rebuilding Our Infrastructure Consulting Experts

Jim Clements, COSA Public Works Department; 207-8020	Christina Ybanez, VIA Metropolitan Transit; 362- 2166
Todd Hemingson, VIA Metropolitan Transit; 362-2166	

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Community Places Where We Play, Gather and Learn Work Group

John Braxton	Richard Gonzalez	Lisa Pirotina
Fred Chavez	Sally Johnson	Rick Reyna
Jessica Fuentes	Amy Jones	Joe Salvador
Eva Gonzalez	Ruby Muna	Diane Thomas

Community Places Where We Play, Gather and Learn Consulting Experts

Rocky Estrada (no longer with the City), COSA Parks & Recreation Department, Park Design & Project Services; call 207-3160 for information

Linda Hook, San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, 207-8808

Milo Kjos, COSA Code Compliance Department; 207- 8200

Laura Samaniego, COSA Code Compliance Department; 207-8200

Linda Stringfellow, COSA Parks & Recreation Department, 207-3042

Ron Strothma, COSA Police Department, SAFFE Officer; 207-8964

Sharon Soderquist, COSA Library Department, 207-2500

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Meeting Calendar

Community Meetings

Kickoff Celebration

Wednesday, September 29, 1999; 6:30 – 7:30 pm

Beacon Hill ES, 1411 W Ashby

Reviewing Neighborhood Strengths and Weaknesses Meeting

Thursday, January 20, 2000; 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Beacon Hill ES, 1411 W Ashby

Reviewing the Strategies Meeting

Tuesday, May 23, 2000; 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Beacon Hill ES; 1411 W Ashby

Finalizing the Plan Meeting

Tuesday, August 22, 2000; 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Beacon Hill ES, 1411 W Ashby

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Kitchen Table Conversations

Thursday, September 16, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Mina Lopez's house; 433 West Hollywood
Tuesday, September 21, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Rachel Espinosa's house; 501 W Summit
Wednesday, September 22, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Elva Cardenas' house; 534 West Elsmere
Wednesday, September 22, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Amy Jones' house; 1014 W Agarita
Thursday, September 23, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Kriterion Montessori School; 611 W Ashby
Monday, September 27, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Mike Villarreal's house; 1106 Blanco
Thursday, September 30, 1999 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Alta Vista Neighborhood Association Meeting; Mark Twain MS
Tuesday, October 12, 1999 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Jana Laven's house; 944 West Mulberry
Thursday, October 14, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Eva Gonzalez's house; 942 Fulton
Friday, October 22, 1999 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	John Braxton's house; 621 Rosewood
Sunday, October 24, 1999; during the afternoon celebration	Midtown Classic Days; Blanco Road
Tuesday, October 26, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Ruben & Josie Nunez's house; 618 West Mistletoe
Thursday, November 4, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm	523 West Magnolia
Thursday, November 11, 1999 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm	St. Ann's Parish Hall; corner of Fredericksburg & Ashby

Business Community Meetings

Monday, January 10, 2000 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	VIA Metro Center; 1021 San Pedro
Tuesday, May 9, 2000 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Beacon Hill Presbyterian Church; 1101 W Woodlawn

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Work Group Meetings

<i>Heart of the Neighborhood</i>	<i>Getting Around Town & Rebuilding Our Infrastructure</i>	<i>Community Places Where We Play, Gather and Learn</i>
Mon., Jan. 31, 2000, 6:30 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office	Tues., Feb. 1, 2000, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office	Wed., Feb. 2, 2000, 6:00 pm, Beacon Hill Presbyterian Church
Thurs., Feb. 10, 2000, 6:30 pm, Twain MS cafeteria	Tues., Feb. 8, 2000, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office	Thurs., Feb. 17, 2000, 6:00 pm, Beacon Hill Presbyterian Church
Thurs., Feb 24, 2000, 6:30 pm, VIA Metro Center	Tues., Feb. 29, 2000, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office	Wed., March 1, 2000, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office
Thurs., March 9, 2000, 6:30 pm, VIA Metro Center	Thurs., March 16, 2000, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office	Wed., March 15, 2000, 6:00 pm, VIA Metro Center
Wed., March 22, 2000, 6:30 pm, VIA Metro Center	Wed., March 29, 2000, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office	Tue., March 28, 2000, 6:00 pm, Beacon Hill Presbyterian Church
Tue., April 4, 2000, 6:30 pm, VIA Metro Center	Tues., May 2, 2000, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office	Tue., April 11, 2000, 6:00 pm, VIA Metro Center
Wed., April 19, 2000, 6:30 pm, VIA Metro Center		Wed., April 26, 2000, 6:00 pm, VIA Metro Center
Thurs., May 11, 2000, 6:30 pm, VIA Metro Center		Wed., May 3, 200, 6:00 pm, MidTown on Blanco Office
		Thurs., May 11, 2000, 6:00 pm, VIA Metro Center

Conversion Project Suggestion Form

The purpose of this form is to initiate discussion on a project involving the conversion of utility service. Provide as much information as possible (if you need more room, attachments--especially maps and drawings--are encouraged).

For Staff Use Only

Project Number: _____

Project Name: _____

Please Print or Type

Initiated By: _____

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

Do you represent a group? If so, group name is: _____

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Conversion Type: (i.e. overhead to underground\relocate overhead\etc.)_____

_____.

Threshold Status: Is this project linked to a public improvement project, i.e. a street widening project; or is it of a unique city-wide significance, or is it strongly supported by the affected property owners, most of whom would sign a petition requesting the project? Please explain:

_____.

Project Boundaries (e.g. San Pedro from Basse to Jackson-Keller) :

_____.

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Proposed Improvements Summary (Describe what you want the project to accomplish):

Other Comments:

Send To:

Dave Pasley, Special Projects Coordinator
Department of Public Works
PO Box 839966
San Antonio, Texas 78283-3966

Phone: 210-207-3398
Fax: 210-207-4406
E-Mail: Pasplan@ci.sat.tx.us

Midtown Neighborhoods Plan

Historic Districts and Conservation Districts

The following text provides a brief description of historic districts and conservation districts. As called for in the Heart of the Neighborhood Chapter of the plan, educational materials will need to be developed and meetings will need to be scheduled for the neighborhoods to further discuss the pluses and minuses of each of these designations.

Historic Districts

Will designation affect the use of my property? NO

- Use of property is regulated by the City's Zoning ordinance. Whatever uses are permitted by the zoning for the property are not affected by historic district designation. Historic district designation is concerned with the aesthetics, not the uses of the property

Does district designation require me to "retrofit" my property to a more "historic" character? NO

- Historic district designation will not require retrofitting. If a property owner elects to make an addition or an improvement to his property after designation, the addition or improvement will need architectural review and approval by the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC).

Does district designation affect changes to the interior of a property? NO

- Historic district designation does not regulate interior changes to a property.

Will I always need to hire an architect? NO

- Just as before historic designation, a minor change to a property probably would not need the services of an architect. However, just as in undesignated areas, a property owner would probably elect to hire an architect or other professional to assist in plans for a major change to his or her property.

Can I pick my own paint colors? YES

- HDRC will review changes in paint colors, but ordinarily the property owner's choice will be respected unless the colors are completely out of character. If colors are determined inappropriate, the Historic Preservation Officer can assist the property owner in color selection.

Will my Taxes go up? NO

- Historic designation in itself does not increase taxes. Taxes go up if the assessed valuation of a property increases or the tax rate is increased by a political entity.

Midtown Neighborhoods Plan**Conservation Districts**

In 1998, City Council, through the CRAG I initiative, targeted the designation of neighborhood Conservation Districts as a CRAG priority action recommendation. Starting in late 2000, the Conservation District Ordinance planning tool, in the form of a “zoning overlay” (a specific geographic area identified as an “overlay” to the base zoning, but does not change the zoning designation use) will be available to help implement neighborhood and community plans, through the application of neighborhood based design standards, individually tailored to address specific redevelopment issues.

Recognized as a means to promote neighborhood revitalization for communities within Loop 410, Conservation District designation identifies a set of “character-defining elements,” (e.g. front porches, metal roofs, detached garages, building height, setbacks, etc.) for a specific residential and/or commercial area, that are adopted as design development standards. A review process of these neighborhood attributes then is placed into effect, in an effort to retain neighborhood integrity, protect and stabilize property values, and prevent insensitive development. The review process, which will address infill development or rehabilitation projects, is to be administered through the Planning Department staff, and will allow a streamlined, objective evaluation of projects proposed within established Conservation District boundaries.

As a zoning overlay designation, Conservation District status does not affect the use of property, nor does it require a property owner to rehabilitate existing structures to conform to the design standards. In addition, Conservation District designation alone does not increase property taxes.

Conservation District designation, whether used to protect distinctive architecture, combat incompatible development, or stabilize property values, is a neighborhood revitalization planning tool that provides a more predictable course of development, an efficient building permit process without the necessity of a HDRC review, and a means of self-determination for residential and commercial neighborhood organizations.

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Historic Homeownership Assistance Act (HR 1172 and S 664)

The following information was developed by Preservation Action (www.preservationaction.org) and is used with their permission. Also see the National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.nationaltrust.org) for additional information on this act.

The historic homeownership rehabilitation tax credit was first introduced in Congress in 1995. The 20 percent federal income tax credit would be attractive to first-time homeowners, long-time residents and fixer-uppers alike, representing a broad spectrum of income levels.

Qualifying Properties:

Single-family and multi-family residences, condominiums and cooperatives listed on the National Register of Historic Places, state or local registers, contributing buildings in historic districts and the portion of a qualified building used as a principal residence.

Amount of Allowable Credit:

Twenty percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures credited against a homeowner's federal income tax liability up to \$40,000 (\$200,000 of qualified rehab) for each principal residence. Expenditures must equal or exceed \$5,000 or the adjusted basis, whichever is greater. Exceptions: buildings in census tracts targeted as distressed, Enterprise Zones or Empowerment Zones require a minimum investment of \$5,000. Five percent must be spent on the exterior. Credit can be applied to tax liability over a number of years. If the residence is vacated or sold before five years, the credit is subject to recapture.

"Pass Through" Feature

A developer may rehabilitate a qualifying property and sell it to a homeowner with the credit.

Lower Income Families Can Afford Rehabilitated Historic Housing

Taxpayers with little tax liability may convert the credit into a mortgage credit certificate to reduce the costs of homeownership (see below).

Standards for Rehab

All rehabilitation must meet The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. Final certification will consider location in a "targeted area", Enterprise Zone or Empowerment Zone.

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The tax credit can be used in three ways:

1. Reduction of a taxpayer's federal income tax,
2. Conversion of the credit to a mortgage certificate which enables a receiving lending institution to apply the credit to its own tax liability. In return, the lending institution compensates the homeowner through an equivalent reduction of interest on his/her mortgage.
3. In a distressed census tract only, the mortgage certificate can be transferred to a lending institution which, as above, can apply the credit toward the reduction of its federal tax liability. In return, the lender can make the credit amount available in cash to be applied to the purchase price of the residence. This feature assists citizens to meet the down payment requirements and effectively reduce the appraisal gap.

In all cases, a developer can rehabilitate and sell the property, passing the credit to a qualified owner.

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First-Time Homebuyer Assistance Programs

San Antonio Development Agency
115 E. Travis, Suite 800; San Antonio TX 78205
Phone: 225-6833
Executive Director: Doug Aloise

Habitat for Humanity
311 Probandt; San Antonio TX 78204
Phone: 223-5203
Executive Director: Amy Hartman

San Antonio Alternative Housing Corp.
1215 S. Trinity Street; San Antonio TX 78207
Phone: 224-2349
Executive Director: Rod Radle

Our Casas Residence Council
3006 Guadalupe; San Antonio TX 78207
Phone: 433-2787
Executive Director: Dario Chapa

Neighborhood Housing Services of SA
851 Steves Avenue; San Antonio TX 78210
Phone: 533-6673
Executive Director: Robert Jodon

Unitarian Universalist Housing Assistance*
3415 Rock Creek Run; San Antonio TX 78230
Phone: 342-0135
Executive Director: June Kachtik

* Focuses services in the Alta Vista and Beacon Hill neighborhoods.

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Neighborhood Survey

As a part of the planning effort, citizen volunteers agreed to assist with verifying land uses, rating the structural condition of houses and businesses in the planning area, and identifying key architectural features. All volunteers were trained in order to accomplish these tasks.

Survey Training Sessions

Saturday, February 26, 2000; 8:30 am – 12:00 pm; VIA Metro Center	Saturday, March 4, 2000; 8:30 am – 12:00 pm; VIA Metro Center
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The land use verification process included a site review of the current land use of each parcel in the planning area. The end result of this process was a verified or corrected land use map.

The information on structural conditions and key architectural features will be used by the neighborhoods after the completion of the plan to identify housing in need of repair, areas for potential historic and/or conservation districts, missing links in the pedestrian networks and several other efforts. All of the variables listed on the two attached surveys have been entered into a geographic database and can be mapped as well as numerically analyzed.

Housing Conditions Map

The data gathered during the survey process was used to create the Housing Conditions Map found in the Heart of the Neighborhood chapter. Three criteria were used to determine the quality of housing: 1) extent of cracks and structural leaning, 2) condition of the exterior siding, and 3) roof condition. Cracks or structural leaning was rated as either no cracks or leaning (three points), minor cracks or leaning (two points) or major cracks or leaning (one point). The remaining criteria were rated as either good (three points), needs minor repair (two points) and needs major repair (one point). Adding the three criteria together resulted in a composite score for each house. Each residential structure could score between a maximum of nine points to a minimum of three points.

To reach the desired end result of a block-face comparison of housing conditions, the composite scores for each house were averaged by the block-face. The block-face averages fall between 5.8 points to nine points. About 20 percent of the block-face averages are identified as "below average", about 64 percent are identified as "average" and about 16 percent are identified as being in "above average" condition. A "below average" block-face does not indicate that all of the structures are in a poor condition. This ranking indicates that average of all of the composite scores for the block-face compares unfavorably with the remainder of the block-faces in the planning area.

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Commercial Page 1

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Commercial Page 2

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Educational Resources

225-READ Central Referral Center

Provides client and volunteer referrals to approximately 215 literacy services provider sites located throughout the San Antonio metropolitan area.

225-READ Central Referral Center

1502 Fitch Street, 78211

(210) 225-7323

Hours: 8:15 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

Fr. Albert J. Benavides

Learning and Leadership Development Center

515 Castroville Rd., 78237

(210) 435-2352 or 435-2353

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday

Bob & Jeanne Billa

Learning & Leadership Development Center

1033 Ada, 78223

(210) 534-9905

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday

Columbia Heights

Learning and Leadership Development Center

1502 Fitch Street, 78211

(210) 977-8464 or 977-8465

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday

Margarita R. Huantes

Learning and Leadership Development Center

1411 Guadalupe, 78207

(210) 225-0174 or 225-0175

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday

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St. Mary's

Learning and Leadership Development Center

3141 Culebra Rd., 78228

(210) 436-7633

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. Monday - Thursday

7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday

St. Philip's

Learning and Leadership Development Center

101 Meerscheidt St., 78203

(210) 531-4852 or 531-4853

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. Monday - Thursday

7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday

Willie C. Velasquez

Learning & Leadership Development Center

1302 N. Zarzamora, 78207

(210) 733-9355 or 733-0101

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Friday

OPENING SOON: Regional LLDC

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Public Projects

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Map here

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Dictionary

Community Facilities – Services or conveniences provided for or available to a community. Examples include parks, libraries, fire/police stations, etc.

COSA – City of San Antonio

Charrette – is a brainstorming exercise that results in a quick visual presentation of the generated ideas.

Conservation District – is a “zoning overlay” (a specific geographic area identified as an “overlay” to the base zoning, but does not change the zoning designation use) that includes the application of neighborhood based design standards, individually tailored to address specific redevelopment issues.

Design Guidelines – Design guidelines are intended to provide a framework of design criteria within which physical planning can take place. The guidelines provide suggestions for the design of new homes/businesses and repair/rehabilitation of existing homes/businesses in order to maintain the overall character of the neighborhood. Generally, character-defining elements such as front porches, roof slopes, etc. are emphasized in residential guidelines while setbacks, canopies and signage may be emphasized in commercial guidelines.

Economic Base – The foundation on which a neighborhood relies for economic sustainability.

Façade – the exterior wall of a building exposed to public view.

Historic Tax Credits – Ad Valorem tax (property tax) exemption is available to City of San Antonio home and commercial property owners who substantially restore or renovate their historic properties. If a commercial property is listed on the National Register of Historic Properties or a contributing structure in a National Register Historic District, commercial property owners may be eligible for a federal income tax credit for completing a restoration or renovation of the historic property.

Infill Housing – New housing constructed on vacant lots in an area that is predominantly developed. The new housing can include: single-family, duplexes, townhouses, apartments, senior housing, etc.

Land Use – The manner in which land is used. For example, low-density residential land uses primarily include single-family houses.

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Landscaping Ordinance – Implemented in 1994, the primary purpose of the City's Landscaping Ordinance is to create commercial land uses that not only are attractive but add value to the property. Landscaping includes preservation of existing trees, understory plants, and natural areas in addition to installing new trees and plants.

Linear Parks– Provides a physical link between two or more areas. Linear park trails can accommodate bicycling, hiking, jogging, and walking. The width of a linear park system is important because the amount of land included in the corridor is intended to reflect a park-like environment.

Livable Wage – An income sufficient to meet a family's basic needs.

Live/Work Units – Living units which also are zoned to allow small businesses to operate from a portion of the structure, generally identified by small retail or service oriented businesses or artist studies.

Marketing Studies – A detailed study of the potential consumers in a certain area. This type of study helps businesses determine whether or not it would be beneficial to them to locate to, develop in, or service an area.

Master Plan – The City's Master Plan Policies were adopted May 1997. The Master Plan Policies are intended to provide guidance in the evaluation of future decisions on land use, infrastructure improvements, transportation, and other issues, and ordinances that are proposed and considered after the adoption of the Master Plan Policies. It should be consistent with the relevant goals and policies contained in the Plan. The primary objectives of master plans are to coordinate public and private investment; minimize conflict between land uses; influence and manage the development of the community; increase both the benefits and cost effectiveness of public investment; predict infrastructure and service needs in advance of demand; and ensure that community facilities are located to best serve the community.

Microenterprise – Small business entities, usually employing less than five persons.

Municipal Management District – A defined geographic area which established a separate taxing entity to provide funds for improvements within that area. Examples are TIFs (Tax Increment Financing districts) and PIDs (Public Improvement Districts).

Node – A center of activity or development, often located at a major intersection.

Overlay Zoning – is a zoning classification which defines an addition set of requirements over and above the base zoning requirements.

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Planning Commission / City Council Recognition – The Planning Commission reviews community plans to ensure the document is inclusive, consistent with city policies and an accurate reflection of the community's values. After Planning Commission recognition, the plan is forwarded to City Council for adoption as a component of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan. An approved plan is used by city departments, boards and commissions as a guide for decision-making.

Public Improvement District – see Municipal Management District

Sign Ordinance – Rules and regulations that govern the posting of signs in a city.

Streetscape –A design term referring to all the elements that constitute the physical makeup of a street and that, as a group, define its character, including building frontage, street paving, street furniture, landscaping, awnings, marquees, signs, and lighting.

Zoning – Regulates density and land use. Zoning is a key tool for carrying out planning policy.

Zoning Ordinance – Rules and regulations that govern the way land is zoned (separated according to land uses) in a city.

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Letters of Support